

**DULUTH AMERICAN INDIAN
COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, January 28, 2008 - 5:00 p.m.
Room 402 City Hall**

Members Present: Tony LaDeaux, Michele Gordon, Ricky DeFoe, John Day, Joy Dorscher, Warner Wirta, Donna Ennis

Excused Absent: Dr. Robert Powless, Beatrice Kitto

Absent: Mike Sayers

Staff present: John Judd, Katie Nickolay, Dave Holbeck

Others present: See sign-in sheets

CALL TO ORDER, APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Motion by Joy Dorscher, seconded by Warner Wirta to approve the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 17, 2007 MEETING:

Change to minutes, Renee Matson will be here in March, not in February.

Motion by Joy Dorscher, seconded by Warner Wirta to approve the minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

COMMUNITY PUBLIC FORUM / OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Report from the Nominations Committee for DAIC officers for 2008 and Election of Officers – John Day

At the beginning of every year, new officers are elected for the DAIC. Day received nominations for the two co-chair positions. Day, Gordon, DeFoe, and Dorscher were nominated. Day respectfully declined. There were no other nominations during the meeting. No other decline decisions from Gordon, DeFoe, or Dorscher.

Commission members voted by ballot. The two co-chairs for 2008 are Gordon and Dorscher.

Day only one nomination for the secretary position. Ennis was nominated. Day called for other nominations. There were no other nominations.

**Motion by Day to elect Ennis by acclimation as the secretary for 2008.
Commission supported Ennis unanimously.**

Commission Liaison with the Children's Justice Initiative (CJI) – Tony LaDeaux
The CJI has not lined up another meeting yet. Education Summit and CJI meetings should be starting up shortly. CJI will be up again as a DAIC topic in February. Judd handed around new schedules for 2008 meetings. Homeless issue is moved to February and will be attended by Char Hanson as the staff person. The March 17th meeting will have Renee Matson, Executive Director from Spirit Mountain.

Update on Education and Racism Summit Meeting of December 18, 2007 –
No news currently. Meetings should start up soon. See above.

Discussion of DAIC Meeting Attendance Records and Applications to Fill Expiring and Expired Terms on the Commission – Judd discussed current attendance and talked about future attendance policies. The award for perfect attendance goes to LaDeaux. Judd said things can be changed in the DAIC by-laws to have commission members serve in three consecutive terms instead of two. DeFoe asked about his position because he came in the middle of the term. Currently DeFoe can serve two more terms. Ennis read from the by-laws, three unexcused absences in three consecutive months could be/are grounds for dismissal. Ennis read that request for removal of members be sent to the Mayor. As of this meeting, Sayers is the only commission member who is on grounds for dismissal due to unexcused absences. Wilson's position is also open and up for nomination. DAIC to request that the Mayor approve two new DAIC members. Ennis will send these requests to the mayor. Day said his spot could be filled in May by someone other than him. He says he has been here for six years and feels that there are many people in Duluth that should have the chance to fill his spot. Judd recommended that the commission get two new members immediately and another to take Day's when his term expires. Judd encouraged the public and the Commissioners to encourage interested persons to go to 2nd floor Clerk's office of City Hall to fill out an application for the DAIC.

Motion by Donna Ennis, seconded by Joy Dorscher, to amend the by-laws, Article IV- Membership Terms to allow Commission members to serve three consecutive terms rather than two consecutive terms. The motion passed unanimously.

Judd will have this proposed change prepared for the March meeting and he will forward information about requesting new members to the clerk's office. Judd also invited people to apply to the Duluth's Citizen's Community Development Committee (CDC). The CDC reviews and makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Applicants for this commission must be citizens of Duluth. The CDC members attend meetings

monthly and bi-monthly towards the end of the year during the grant application process.

Day has been informed that the Human Rights Commission (HRC) does not have one American Indian member on it. The HRC shares office space with the Attorney's office (4th floor), contact Bob Grytdahl, the Human Rights officer. Jane Maddy is the HRC chair. HRC meets once a month. Pick up applications for the DAIC, CDC or the HRC at the City Clerk's office (2nd floor) or on the City's web page.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review Draft of Letter of Support for the Native American Business Enterprise Center – Ennis

There was not enough time to get a letter of support from the DAIC to Brad Clifford for inclusion in Grant application with Cass Lake Enterprise. Clifford said the grant application has been submitted. The partner in the past has been the Minority Partner Enterprise in Minneapolis but they are now the competitor. Clifford suggested that the DAIC may want to use more persuasion in order to have the Native American Business Enterprise Center operating in Duluth and not in Minneapolis. Judd said that Keith Hamre, Community Development Division Manager, had sent a letter of support for the Enterprise Center grant application. Clifford hopes that getting the Enterprise Center located in Duluth would assist Indian-owned businesses to get some of the contracts for the area's proposed big projects such as the DECC expansion and mining expansion projects on the Iron Range. He hopes to identify those as opportunities for collaboration. Regardless of the competitive collaboration for the contracts, he is still willing to work on getting a grant from the Native American Chamber of Commerce. A decision on the Grant application will be made in April.

DeFoe talked about needed opportunities for Indian youth. LaDeaux talked about Indian youth being taken advantage of and their money being taken from them. Clifford says he is reconstituting the North Star Community Development Corporation (NSCDC) Board and that he needs help with that. He would like help on the board from the DAIC if he could get it through. Ennis asked if LaDeaux is open to be the DAIC representation on this new board.

Motion by Donna Ennis, seconded by Michele Gordon, for Tony LaDeaux to sit on the Board of a new NSCDC. Motion approved unanimously.

Ennis said she did not recall committing to write a letter of support for Clifford and that she is uncertain of the procedure to when writing such a letter. There was also perhaps some miscommunication between Clifford and Ennis regarding the letter. Clifford apologized for the miscommunication. Dorscher said points should be taken on writing such a letter. For the future, to reduce stress, requests for letters of support need to include a draft of what should be in the letter provided in outline/bullet form and a

deadline of when it needs to be done. No motion needs to be made, but these are the steps that need to be followed in the future.

Barrels dumped in Lake Superior -

Wirta sent around documents from the Red Cliff Band about research on the barrels dumped in Lake Superior. Hopefully there will be some resolution coming out of this in 2-3 months when the Department of Health and Human Services will issue their report. He found the information in this report to be a lot of words with little substance. The Red Cliff Band has a contract with the Pentagon to look at the barrel situation in Lake Superior. Wirta knows a couple of things about the prevailing contamination in the lake. Wirta said to contact him for the Compact Disk (CD) with more information if people want to listen/view it. Day also has a copy of the CD. Wirta is waiting on two video tapes with more information from a local news station. Gordon suggested reviewing the CDs in an upcoming meeting. Wirta said each tape is an hour and a half. Judd suggested scheduling a special meeting/viewing session to look at the tapes. Wirta said Lake Superior is so vital that the DAIC has to take a stand. He advised the Commission to read the letter that he sent to Duluth Tribune editor about the barrels. He has not gotten any response to this letter yet. Wirta suggested contacting certain RBC's. He felt the barrels were toxic and that the Reservation Business Committees (RBCs) should have interest. DeFoe talked about the letter and that it should be sent to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) because the MCT has more power and that is a lot more efficient than going to every RBC. Gordon proposed that June 16th will be a special meeting to review the tapes. Dorscher had a question about 1990 and 1993 geophysical surveys (in the hand-out from Wirta) and was wondering if the surveys could be gotten a hold of by the DAIC. Wirta is wondering when Red Cliff will get funding to further investigate the barrels. DeFoe said the funding will happen this spring. DeFoe says they have gotten the first phase of funding and will do some actual testing in spring. He said there should be an independent study that can be done for \$50,000, and that the funding should not be tied to the Federal government. He said benefits to raise money are in the works but that it takes time. He says that an independent study needs to be done by the people who will provide a real answer on the toxic levels in the drinking water. He says there are a lot of ideas and vision, but it takes time and money for the implementation of the human resources. DAIC members should look through the handout and be prepared to discuss it at the June meeting. DeFoe said Greg Price is getting hit from different sides of the media for taking a stand on a number of issues such as this because they are political issues and he cannot be expected to step up alone for this issue as well. DeFoe added that these plans can be looked at, but the thing that needs to be done is to look for strategies to come up with \$50,000 for an independent investigation. DeFoe also had a concern that money cannot come through the DAIC because the DAIC is not a money allocating Commission.

Gordon said a DAIC sub-committee could be formed around this issue with Wirta, DeFoe and Brad Clifford to meet and gather more information. Day said the reality is

that the toxic poisoning may not be slow and that poison could be serious right away. He said these concerns need to be marketed to the citizens of Duluth and people living around the Lake. Day talked about the seriousness of the issue and how the costs to clean the Lake could be far greater than the \$50,000 for the study. Public said the more the DAIC works at getting the money, the more road blocks they will come up against. He said to have a committee to work on that idea is important and it will be hard work to go against the government that does not want the people to find out what is going on in the lake with the barrels. LaDeaux said to not think of the fear of the government on this issue. The sub-committee is Wirta, DeFoe, and Clifford and towards the end of the meeting, Gordon stated that she would also like to help the sub-committee.

Review of Application of Support to the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Single-Family Housing Program - Northern Communities Land Trust – Cancelled rescheduled to the February 25th meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPCOMING EVENTS AND COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Day: Recommended that in near the future we invite Mayor Ness to a meeting to address some of his thoughts and tell him where the DAIC is heading. He thinks that DAIC should look for a ways to put a full-time staff person in City Hall that is American Indian that can carry out the tasks of the DAIC.

LaDeaux: Civilian Review Board is gaining momentum. More people are becoming interested but not enough people in the community know about it. People still need to develop trust in the concept. He feels that racism is a matter of choice. He is working towards helping victims of racism.

Ennis: Next month is Black History Month. There is a cultural event on Feb. 14th with a dinner and a program.

Judd: Next DAIC meeting is the 25th of February (because of the February 18 Presidents' Day Holiday). Char (Hanson) McLennan will be staffing that meeting and also talking about the City's homelessness issue. Judd passed around a handout regarding the recent Wilder Research study of homelessness on Northern Minnesota's Indian Reservations. He will also try and make arrangements for members of the DAIC to meet with the Mayor and find out when can come to a regular DAIC meeting.

NEXT MEETING/DATE/LOCATION:

Next meeting is February 25th, 2008 at 5pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Motion by Dorscher, seconded by Ennis. The meeting adjourned.